



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

CONFERENCE ON THE CARIBBEAN

June 18 - 21, 2007, Washington, D.C.

"(We) are becoming more than neighbors united by the accident of geography. We're becoming a community linked by common values and shared interests in the close bonds of family and friendship. These growing ties have helped advance peace and prosperity. Yet amid the progress we also see terrible want."

—President George W. Bush

President George W. Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice will meet with Heads of Government and Chiefs of State from the 14 sovereign members of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to discuss issues impacting the future of the region. Top-level discussions will focus on strengthening ongoing partnership programs to address needs and concerns of the people in the Caribbean.

ECONOMIC GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

- The U.S. Government (USG) has committed \$200 million to help banks lend to small Caribbean and Latin American companies by better assessing creditworthiness, and will direct the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to share financial risk with lending banks.
- The USG has led the G-8 debt reduction initiative to provide \$4.8 billion in multilateral debt relief to some of the poorest countries in the Americas.
- The USG actively promotes job creation and equal opportunity for all people in the hemisphere through trade agreements and other economic development assistance.

SOCIAL INVESTMENT

- President Bush has increased U.S. foreign assistance to the Caribbean from \$58 million in FY 2000 to \$330 million in FY 2007.
- Based in Jamaica, the U.S.-funded Caribbean Center of Excellence for Teacher Training (C-CETT) invested \$8.9 million from 2002 to 2006 and has committed

an additional \$5 million to train and support teachers in primary grade reading programs.

- U.S. funding for HIV/AIDS programs in the Western Hemisphere has grown from \$22 million in 2001 to over \$143 million planned in 2007, with Haiti and Guyana included as focus countries in the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).
- The U.S. Navy Ship Comfort is on a humanitarian mission to treat 85,000 patients and perform 1,500 surgeries throughout the Caribbean and Central and South America.

SECURITY

- Enduring Friendship, a multi-year \$75 million program led by the Department of Defense through South COM, helps partner nations in the Caribbean to anticipate and respond to threats and emergencies in their territorial waters.
- Several USG agencies provided security support and more than \$9 million in training and programs to nations hosting the Cricket World Cup. This training will continue to benefit the region's security preparedness and response efforts.
- Through close cooperation and assistance from the U.S., close to 260 metric tons of illicit drugs were seized in the region with an estimated value of more than \$5.5 billion.
- In 2004, the last year a hurricane devastated the Caribbean, USAID and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance provided more than \$100 million in assistance.